

U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)

2024-2027 Climate Change Risk Management Plan

Approved by the Head of the Agency:

Signature

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Executive Summary

GSA is committed to securing federal property and supply-chain investments, which are critical to meeting our objectives in supporting the delivery of government services to the public. Investments to manage climate risks and adapt through planning and preparing for climate hazards now - to reduce potential future losses - can help limit federal fiscal exposure and the need to take far more costly steps in the future.¹ This Climate Change Risk Management Plan (Plan) primarily addresses physical risks and implications across GSA’s governance, strategy, risk management, metrics and targets, and like prior GSA plans is solely focused on the adaptation response to climate change. This Plan does not address the known transition² risks and implications across the same topics for both GSA and its customers.

Strategically, the Plan emphasizes integrating climate risk management into GSA's core business operations, which ruggedizes the agency for both the observed and expected changes in climate. Risk-management protocols are proposed to proactively identify and mitigate climate-related threats, safeguarding the agency's assets and operations. The planned actions position GSA to provide customer agencies with innovative, expert solutions to the myriad of challenges posed by climate change risks in a dynamic policy and fiscal environment. GSA’s national services lines, the Public Buildings Service (PBS) and the Federal Acquisition Service (FAS), offer an established and reliable governance structure and business processes to facilitate an integrated national strategy for climate-adaptation and climate-risk management actions.

This Plan summarizes GSA’s exposure, approach, accomplishments, plans, actions, and coordination activities to evaluate the agency’s climate change risks and vulnerabilities to manage both the short- and long-term effects of climate change on the agency’s mission and operations. GSA will strive to implement its climate adaptation responses with foresight, ensuring reliable performance in changing conditions for a more secure future for the agency and its customers.

¹ <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-106362.pdf>

² [NCA 5 Glossary](#). “Transition risk: A risk associated with uncertain impacts, including financial and economic, that could result from a transition to a net-zero emissions economy.”

These two areas align with GSA’s identified priority actions, as detailed in the narrative below.

Section 2: Exposure Assessment

GSA used the Federal Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation Application (Federal Mapping App)— which was developed for federal agencies by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to conduct a high-level screening of climate hazard exposure for federal facilities and personnel.

GSA assessed the exposure of its buildings; employees; and lands, waters, and cultural and natural resources to five climate hazards: extreme heat, extreme precipitation, sea level rise, flooding, and wildfire risk.

The source of the climate data used by the Federal Mapping App is available at this link: [Data Sources | Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation](#)

Exposure to extreme heat, extreme precipitation, and sea level rise were evaluated at mid- (2050) and late-century (2080) under two emissions scenarios, Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 4.5 and RCP 8.5. Exposure to flooding and wildfire risk were only evaluated for the present day due to data constraints.

Climate scenarios considered in agency risk assessment (RCP 4.5 and RCP 8.5) are detailed in Table 3 of the 5th [National Climate Assessment](#).

Additional details about the data used in this assessment are provided in Appendix A.

extreme precipitation in both RCP 4.5 (SSP 2-4.5) and RCP 8.5 (SSP 5-8.5) scenarios in 2050, with a small minority seeing significant changes from the historical baseline. This trend is projected to reverse only for an RCP 8.5 (SSP 5-8.5) scenario in 2080. Extreme precipitation can cause localized flooding and subsequently damage to the property and building.

Sea Level Rise

Because a majority of buildings are located away from coastlines, there is a small minority of buildings with exposure to sea level rise. There is a slightly higher exposure within a 2080 timeframe, though the differences between the two climate scenarios are minor. Sea level rise at buildings can cause erosion around building foundations and disrupt operations and services.

Flood

When evaluating new properties, GSA considers whether the proposed location is within a floodplain. A small portion of federal buildings are located in floodplains, which helps in prioritization of these assets with high vulnerability. Flooding at buildings can cause damage to the structure and contents, as well as disrupt operations and services.

Wildfire

Buildings under GSA's jurisdiction, custody or control have the lowest exposure overall to wildfire than the other four climate hazards studied, with only 2 percent of the buildings with high to extreme wildfire risk. A majority of that risk is concentrated within the high category. Wildfires can cause extensive and severe damage to buildings and property, causing long-term disruption to operations.

Extreme Heat

While all employees are anticipated to see some increase in extreme heat by 2050 and 2080, there is a variety in the exposure severity. By 2050, a RCP 4.5 (SSP 2-4.5) scenario sees lower levels of temperature increases, while RCP 8.5 (SSP 5-8.5) sees more significant increases. This trend is exaggerated even further when extended to 2080.

Extreme Precipitation

Similar to extreme heat, all employees are anticipated to see an increase in extreme precipitation by 2050 and 2080. However, a few locations have employees that are projected to experience a decrease in extreme precipitation. By 2050, a majority of employees see a minor increase in extreme precipitation for an RCP 4.5 (SSP 2-4.5) scenario, though there is a higher increase when projected out to 2080. For RCP 8.5 (SSP 5-8.5), there is a moderate increase in extreme precipitation in 2050 with a more significant increase in 2080.

Sea Level Rise

The result shows a higher percentage of employees exposed to sea level rise than for buildings, but that difference is due to the broader inclusion of employees' communities in the analysis and the higher concentration of GSA employees located either on the East or West coast (but not necessarily in coastal flood hazard areas). While a higher proportion of employees' communities are exposed, the vast majority of these employees' communities are in the lowest exposure band. The exposure increases along both scenarios when comparing 2050 to 2080. These results can be informative for existing and future practices for workforce flexibility to support delivery of GSA's mission.

Wildfire

Similar to the building analysis, a very low percentage of federal employees are exposed to high to extreme wildfire risk. A majority of this risk is concentrated within the high category rather than very high or extreme.

Climate Hazard Impact on and/or Exposure to Buildings	Priority Action	Timeline for Implementation (2024-2027)
<p>Extreme Heat, Extreme Precipitation, Sea Level Rise, Flood, and Wildfire. Given GSA’s repair backlog, extreme weather events present significant risks to the federal real estate portfolio. Failure to mitigate these risks could result in even costlier expenditures following a natural disaster. Extreme heat and precipitation are the hazards with the largest exposure to federal buildings (96-100%), which can cause damage to roads, limit site access and accelerate building deterioration. While the other hazards have lower exposure, site-specific impacts can have higher criticality and should be monitored together with high exposure hazards at a national level.</p>	<p>Deploy the updated Building Assessment Tool (BAT), to advance methods to monitor and evaluate observed changes in loads due to changing climatic conditions and inform prudent capital investment and asset management. The BAT serves as a strategic planning tool for assessing and analyzing the reinvestment requirements of GSA-controlled federally owned real property portfolio, including identifying liabilities for repair and alterations projects, and consolidating and prioritizing building deficiencies through survey inspections.</p>	<p>FY2023-FY2024: Develop training for current and future BAT users so they can understand, extract, and apply outputs from the updated tool as data is collected in following years (see below). FY2023-FY2025: Incrementally modify the BAT survey to incorporate climate change risks and subsequent building liabilities. FY2026-FY2027: Extract, and apply outputs from data collected. As needed, update user training.</p>

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[Section 4](#), Demonstrating Progress: [4A](#) Measuring Progress, [4B](#) Adaptation in Action

Through the BIL, GSA is modernizing LPOEs along the Canadian and Mexican borders. The BIL includes \$3.4 billion for GSA to undertake 26 major construction and modernization projects at LPOEs along with paving, mission improvement to benefit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and purchase of several leased LPOEs. GSA used forward-looking climate information to develop profiles that assess climate risks at each site. The profiles are used by the project's licensed design professionals to develop robust, adaptive strategies for the intended service life of the asset. The project approval, funding, and implementation take place over multiple years, and the final A-123 decision to integrate the advised climate risk management solutions is dependent upon a customers' risk tolerance and budget constraints.

